



San Diego City Attorney CASEY GWINN

MEDIA RELEASE

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CONTACT: Kathryn Lange, Deputy City Attorney, Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit, (619) 533-5635; San Diego City Attorney Media Information, (619) 235-5725.

MIRACLE CURE PROVES TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

Internet Operators Convicted for Selling Adulterated Drug in Consumer Protection Case

San Diego, CA (September 15, 2000) — They operated a website that promised to provide a miracle cure for autism. Now, they stand convicted of criminal charges. Today, the operators of Little Angels, Inc., pleaded guilty in San Diego Superior Court to selling an adulterated drug and selling hypodermic needles and syringes. The City Attorney's Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit filed charges against Little Angels, Inc., a Nevada corporation, its president, Rudolf Minoot, and treasurer, Rory Dominguez, after an investigation revealed the Little Angels' website was advertising a phony cure for autism.

Little Angels, Inc., operated the website out of a motel room in San Ysidro, California. For \$200, parents of autistic children could buy a jumbo shot of a hormone called secretin from the website. In 1981, secretin was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use in diagnosing certain gastrointestinal illnesses. But it has not been approved for treatment of autism. And investigators tested a sample of the so-called cure bought from Little Angels during an undercover operation in May, and found no detectable level of secretin. Minoot and Dominguez are not licensed physicians or pharmacists.

Today, Superior Court Judge Richard Hanscom placed the Little Angels' president and treasurer on probation for three years, ordered them to complete 240 hours of community service, and pay a \$200 fine. The corporation was ordered to pay more than \$12,000 in fines and costs and will not be able to operate the website.

The case is the result of an investigation by the F.D.A. and the California Department of Health Services, Food and Drug Branch and was prosecuted by the City Attorney's Consumer and Environmental Protection Unit. Consumers can confirm the licensing status of a pharmacy with the California Board of Pharmacy, or when shopping on-line, look for the seal of the Verified Internet Pharmacy Practice Sites, or V.I.P.P.S.

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1200 Third Avenue, Suite 1620, San Diego, California 92101-4188 (619) 236-6220



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